

The lament of David over Abimelech is one of the most pathetic passages of the Old Testament. The fact that the son was in rebellion against his father as well as his affection, and the anxious query, "Is the young man, Abimelech, safe?" lingers in the memory of all who study the life of the great Hebrew King. And yet, the interest which David felt in his son, Abimelech, has its parallel in the more than 10,000 families which make up the American people.

No language can describe a mother's love, or overstate the abiding interest which the father feels in the welfare of his child. From the time when the mother's life hangs in the balance at the birth of the child until the day when the son is scarcely a waking hour when the son is not present in their thoughts and plans. It is to this parental devotion, so universally recognized, that I desire to appeal on this occasion.

Applaud to Parents! I would call the attention of every father and mother to present policies and industrial conditions. I would press upon them this question: "Is the young man, Abimelech, safe? Are you satisfied with the position and the probabilities which now open before your son?"

Is he safe when foreign or domestic financiers are allowed to determine the monetary system of the world? Is he safe when the national banks control the volume of money with which he does business?

Is he safe when the bond holding class determines the size of the national debt, which he must help to pay interest?

Is he safe when by means of taxes laid almost entirely upon consumption he is compelled to contribute according to his wants rather than according to his possessions?

Is he safe when corporate interests influence as they do today the selection of those who are to represent him in the Senate of the United States?

Is he safe when a wage-slave, and you do not know how soon he may be, even if he is not now, is he safe when he is liable to be deprived of trial by jury, through the system known as government by injunction?

Is he safe, if a laboring man, when he is denied the protection of arbitration and compelled to submit to such hours and terms as a corporate employer may propose?

The Reign of Monopoly. But, I desire to call special attention to the growth of the trusts, and to ask you whether your son is safe under the reign of private monopoly? If you cannot leave him a fortune, you can leave him something more valuable than money—the freedom to employ his own brain and his own hands for the advancement of his own welfare. When there is industrial independence, each citizen is stimulated to earnest endeavor by the hope of being able to profit by his genius, his own energy, his own industry and his own virtue. But when private monopoly reaches its full development each branch of industry will be controlled by one, or a few men, and the freedom of the citizen will be lost.

Monopoly, like the divine right of kings, will be kept within the possession of a few from generation to generation, while the real producers of wealth will be condemned to perpetual clerkship or servitude. When private monopoly reaches its full development, your son will buy the finished product at the price which monopoly fixes; he will sell raw material at the price which monopoly fixes; and if he works for wages, he will be paid the price which monopoly fixes. What guarantee has the public that this monopoly will not raise prices? Is it not human nature to make all the profit possible out of a monopoly? Is it not reasonable to expect that the monopoly, after eliminating the salesmen, and adding their salaries, and expenses to the profit account, will seek a further profit by raising prices, and lowering wages? Is it not reasonable to expect that the monopoly will be able to control the quality when the spur of competition no longer compels the manufacturer to furnish the best goods for the lowest possible price?

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nesses of such companies, or by the ownership of not less than two-thirds of their stock, may be found practically everywhere. Then follow the names of five pump companies, accompanied by the statement that these companies are estimated to transact ninety per cent of the steam pump business of the United States, exclusive of high-pressure pumps. The majority of the companies also manufacture such engines.

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traveler, the hotel keeper, the railroad, the livestock and the newspaper.

The Effect of Trusts. The lawyers are finding that with the growth of trusts the business in general is being monopolized. The big corporation attorneys, while less fortunate practitioners are becoming law clerks.

The actors suffer from the theatrical trust. The small manufacturer is constantly menaced by the trusts.

He does not know at what moment some large corporation will attempt to monopolize the business in which he is engaged and give him his choice between bankruptcy and articulation in an industrial conspiracy against the rest of the country. Many have been driven into the trust organization by the larger corporations engaged in the same business, or by trusts formed to control iron, steel, tin plate, or some other product used as a basis for further manufacture. In what business can you now safely invest a small amount of capital today? If you invest in any independent business, he will find it difficult, if not impossible, to compete with a large organization if it attempts to undersell him in his territory, because it can sustain itself by collecting high prices in other parts of the country. If he suppresses his moral objections and takes stock in a monopoly, he does not know how soon those in charge may attempt to "freeze out" the smaller stockholders.

The merchant is losing his independence. The trust fixes the terms upon which he shall sell, and often binds him by contract not to sell a competing article. When the monopoly is complete, the merchant will be abandoned, and the merchant will be abandoned to bear all the risks of trade. When the trust raises prices, the merchant usually has to divide the advance with his customers, so far as the stock on hand is concerned, but when the trust raises prices, the merchant then lets the price fall, the merchant must bear the loss on accumulated stock. When, for instance, the American Steel & Wire Company closed several of its plants, the price of steel was advanced some six thousand employees out of work. It dropped the price of nails and barbed wire in order to work off a surplus stock which had accumulated because the high price had lessened the demand. Every merchant lost money on the nails and wire in hand.

There is already overproduction in many lines. The supply of common chairs is now considerably in excess of the demand. The question is, how can the people be so busy to sit down, I may add that there is also dullness in the shoe trade. The Iron Age in a recent issue pointed out that the production of iron was falling off, the decrease then amounting to more than 50,000 tons per month. Dun's report of July 21st stated that the woolen mills were running at less than half their capacity, and were recently the cotton manufacturers have been threatening to either reduce wages or shut down temporarily. According to Dun's report, the business failures have been greater during each month of 1900 than during the corresponding months of last year, and this occurs in the midst of good crops, and when two wars are in progress.

Trusts and Arbitrary Fictitiousness. The contractor can figure with some accuracy so long as natural laws control, but he cannot protect himself against the arbitrary fiat of the trusts. The trusts, which are the only possible but probable when a monopoly controls the market.

The farmer is one of the most important factors in our national life. Some have said to him, "The hands of the plowshare feed the world." He is not a stockholder in any of the trusts, but he feels the extortion practiced by them all. I am not farming on a large scale, but the misleading report of the trusts, which has been circulating for some time, has been making my oat crop justify me in making reference to my own experience. The New York Tribune recently printed a dispatch from Nebraska to the effect that it had a right to be heard by the government of oats at 20 cents per bushel (supposed to be the yield of 120 acres, and that the amount received for the oats was more than double the price paid for the land. The trusts are the only ones who can dictate upon the prosperity of the farmer, using my experience as an illustration, and asserted that the farmers of Nebraska were becoming so impatient that they were joining the Republican party. They are, first, that they had five acres of oats instead of one hundred and twenty acres; second, that the oats have not yet been threshed, so that the yield is not known; third, that the oats are selling for less than 20 cents in Chicago. Instead of 20 cents in Nebraska, and fourth, that the land upon which the oats were raised cost over \$100 an acre instead of \$5. If, when threshed, the oats are sold for 20 cents, and I sell them in Nebraska for